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Line of Duty Death: Eric Botkin

Retired FF/PM Eric Botkin passed away at 10:30 pm at his home in Temecula on Dec 27 after a courageous battle with occupational-related cancer. Eric was assigned to Station 13 when he found out about his condition. Eric worked for the RFD for 10 ½ years. He retired on Oct 30, 2008. His last assignment was Station 13.

E13 escorted Eric's body from his Temecula home to the mortuary in Downtown Riverside in the early morning hours of Dec 28. RFD members will stand vigil with Eric until the memorial service on Jan 6.

A funeral mass will be held at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church on Jan 6 at 11:00 am. There will be no graveside services. There will be an engine only procession from the church to the reception, which will be held at the Grove Community Church. All are invited to the reception.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting donations be made to the Eric Botkin Memorial Fund. This benevolent fund will provide assistance to fire department families experiencing hardships due to serious line of duty injuries or illnesses of City of Riverside Fire members. Donations may be sent to:

The Eric Botkin Memorial Fund, c/o Riverside City Firefighters Association, PO Box 7817, Riverside CA 92513-7817. Checks may be made out to RCFA, with a note in the memo section of "Eric Botkin Memorial Fund."





Excerpt of Letter from Courtney James, Fundraising Coordinator for Muscular Dystrophy Association of Orange and Riverside Counties, dated Nov 18: On behalf of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) and the children and adults we serve, I would like to recognize you all for participating in our 2009 "Fill—The-Boot" that took place Oct 27-29. As a whole, the Riverside City Firefighters Association raised \$28,284, and we want to thank you for being part of making this event such a success! Your community spirit is commendable."

Email from Su-Shien Kooch, Interim Treasury Supervisor, to Chief Earley and other City officials on Dec 1:

"On behalf of the Treasury staff, we wish to extend our deepest appreciation to the teams from the Fire Department, Police Department and Explosive Unit in handling this unknown white powder/substance. Not only did you perform such proficient protocol, you eased our worry and concern. After the mini briefing from the Fire and Police Departments, we understand that if this type of incident ever occurs again, we will call 911 immediately, rather than trying to contact our Security Officer first. Once again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Have a wonderful and safe day."

Email from BC Campos on Dec 28: I wish to thank the following people for giving their time to make this year's **Spark of Love Toy Drive** such a success and in so making so many children happy this holiday season: Anna Hauldren, Gale Schulte, Tim Odebralski, Chris Adams, Peter Sellas, Roni Forst, Cathy Williams, Lisa Holloway, Mario Miranda, and Bill Aviles. And we greatly give thanks to all the Fire Explorers who made many of the Spark of Love events possible.

Thank You Letter from Liz Estrada and Yvonne Garcia of Hawthorne Elementary School: "We would like to say thank you to Riverside Fire Department for providing your generous service at our 2nd Annual Fall Festival. Our Hawthorne families enjoyed meeting the wonderful firefighters, viewing the fire truck, and receiving hats and stickers. You helped make the event an informational and exciting experience. Without our community's support, all of this could not be possible. Thank you!"

Thank You Letter from Becky/Rick Turrentine and Jim/Eileen Milan to Station 1 Personnel: We would like to thank you for your hospitality on November 21. We had a wonderful time and want to thank you for the delicious dinner, station tour, the terrific ride in the truck, and also the opportunity to learn more about your role in serving the people of Riverside. We truly didn't know quite what to expect and our evening far surpassed our expectations. It was an evening to remember, including the card game and camaraderie. Thank you again for hosting us. We're having fun telling our family and friends about our evening at the fire station."

Congratulations

Dana Roa has been promoted to Deputy City Clerk II and started her new career with the City Clerk's Office on Dec 11. A dessert reception was held in her honor at Fire Administration on Dec 10. Good luck, Dana. The department and USAR program will miss you. Photos to follow in Jan edition.



FF/PM Joe Reed and his crew after passing engine certification.



Spirit of Giving...

Thanks to FF Ryan Hicks for this story: two-year old twins, Christian and Orion, visited him at the Arlington Heights Fire Station. These boys donated all the toys from their second birthday to the Spark of Love Toy Drive.



January Birthdays

John Arendas	1/19
Greg Arias	1/10
Bob Bock	1/20
Christopher Boykin	1/19
Justin Flagg	1/20
Brian Fuentes	1/13
Pat Gabler	1/1
Rob Gabler	1/16
Matt Galik	1/7
Ron Gutterud	1/16
Ryan Hicks	1/2
Mike Koury	1/5
Ed Lastra	1/26



Phil McCormick	1/28
Jeremiah Meadows	1/12
David Nash	1/6
Norma Pagan	1/9
John Peurifoy	1/7
Tyler Reynolds	1/12
Vince Rodgers	1/10
Jim Ryan	1/19
Chad Selk	1/29
Cathy Williams	1/16

Procession



The RFD had the honor of being involved in a procession for Pfc. Marcus Tynes who was killed in Afghanistan. He was flown to March Air Force Base on Dec 3. Arlington Fire Station engine rode in the procession from March AFB to Pierce Brothers Cemetery. RFD units staged along the Van Buren/Arlington route to honor the serviceman.



Santa Ride-A-Long

The 12th Annual Santa Ride-A-Long program took place from Dec 15 - 21. Once again our rookies and Explorers volunteered as Santa and rode on fire apparatus throughout each station's area. RCFA 1076 donated over 4000 candy canes for the program this year.

Photo (top to bottom): Fire Explorer Ryan Carr (AKA Santa or Ox) w/ Public Safety Dispatcher Gaynell Jones and her grandson, Jeremiah. Truck 3 crew, Fire Explorers, Volunteers and of course Santa pay a visit to the Sheepfold Safe House to deliver toys to the children.



Justin Williams Grapples

Cathy William's son, Justin, is a junior at Martin Luther King High School. He recently finished 3rd in his school's first "King of the Mat" Invitational. Justin lost his leg at five years old to cancer. He hasn't let this stop him from competition. Justin is standing with his friend and mentor, Anthony Robles, who is a one-legged wrestler who is wrestling at Arizona State University. The Press-Enterprise ran a great article about Justin in the Jan 5 edition. Check it out!



Employees of the Year

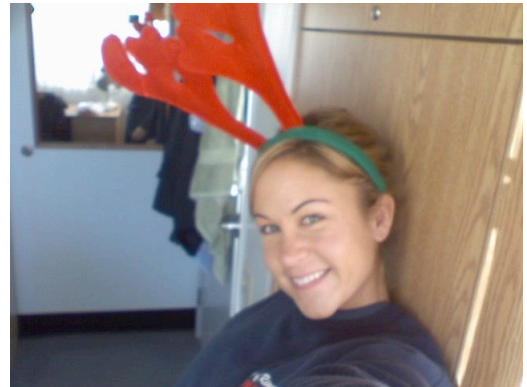
Each year the City of Riverside honors employees from each department as "Employee of the Year." The Fire Department is allowed two recipients, one sworn and one non-sworn. Chief Earley has chosen Battalion Chief Jeff Dredla and Emergency Operations Coordinator Phil McCormick for this year's awards. Jeff and Phil will be formally recognized at a future event.

BC Dredla was selected for his work as Emergency Services Coordinator and for his service in rewriting our Policy and Procedure manual. EOC McCormick was chosen for his contributions during the 2008 Golden Guardian earthquake exercise and his daily dedication to the department.

CERT Celebration

CERT members and instructors enjoyed a year-end celebration party on Dec 16 at the EOC. The event presented the program's accomplishments in 2009 and provided the City/RFD a chance to give special thanks to the CERT members who have helped out at various events this past year as well as to show appreciation to the CERT instructors. Chief Earley and other members of the Command Staff attended the evening's event.

Photo Album



PHOTOS: Who is the masked person with Chris Naron?; Kristen Johnson displays her Christmas Spirit; C shift got serious on their decontamination drill; C shift at Station 3 breaks in the newly remodeled kitchen at Sunday breakfast; Renee Griffin test drives the newest haz mat vehicle (just teasing)

